

HOME AND FARM.

PROSPECTUS.—In this department we shall invite the reader to walk with us each week over our farms—to view their conditions, to note the methods of culture, and to discuss their merits and defects. We will not neglect the less important branches of agriculture while giving due attention to those more universally practiced. The soil and its treatment, the various crops, as wheat, rye, oats, buckwheat, grasses, and other forage crops, horticulture, small and large fruits, live stock, including not only horses, cattle, sheep and swine, but also poultry and pet stock; the dairy, its implements and accounts—in fact every branch in which our farmers are interested will pass under our inspection.

Besides these walks and talks, criticisms and discussions of the tendencies of our farming, of the farmer's life, of education in its relation to agriculture, and of the live agricultural topics of the day, will be given. We shall also give short reviews of the principal agricultural events of importance to us occurring in the world.

It is, however, our chief desire that everything which appears in these columns shall bear directly upon our own farms and customs. We shall, therefore, present to the farmers of the Maritime Provinces not only the results of the latest investigations in the sciences and in farming, but also those established truths which must govern the conduct of the farmer who would obtain the greatest returns for his capital, to remind him of matters which he knows, but fails to practice, and to assist him in rising above his surroundings, and becoming master of his work, and a happier and better man.

CARE OF GRASS LANDS.—No subject is of greater importance to our farmers than this—our largest crop. Our thousands of acres of meadow yield, if not the greatest, nearly the greatest, returns of any single article; hence, too much care cannot be exercised in the management of these lands.

SELECTION OF SEED.—There are certain things essential to bear in mind, but to which, it is to be feared, little attention is paid. The variety of grass should be adapted to the soil. Grasses which only grow well on moist soils should not be planted on dry uplands, nor vice versa; still less should those which are especially designed for pasture, such as have short stems, and mostly grow to leaves, be sown for the meadow. There are some grasses especially adapted for pasturing, and others only fit for the meadow. To this latter class belongs timothy, (it does not, as a rule, grow after the middle of the summer to any extent), which has a large bulb at its base, easily injured by the treading of stock, or by being bitten or pulled up during their grazing. There are, on the other hand, grasses which seem to be adapted for both purposes under certain conditions. The farmer must acquaint himself with his soil and the habits of these different grasses before he can select wisely which to sow. The germination of the seed should be taken into consideration. With no other seed is there such great variability, the amount of live seeds varying from one or two up to nearly every seed per hundred in different grasses. This may be determined by sprouting some seed in a fold of cloth. One or two hundred seeds are counted out and sprinkled evenly over a piece of white flannel; this is then folded together, turning the seeds in, and dipped into lukewarm water till the cloth is saturated, then withdrawn, placed in a covered dish, to retain moisture, in a warm place near the stove for from twenty-four hours to four days. The cloth is then unfolded, and the sprouted seed counted, which gives in a rough way the number of fertile seeds. In taking the sample, a fair average should be aimed at, and any seeds of weeds should be noticed. Often, the weed may be told by the seed, but if it cannot be made out, the sprouting of it may reveal its nature.

How to Sow—The common practice is to sow the seed with some other crop. This is a great mistake, and rests upon two false assumptions. First, that the other crop assists the seed to "catch," and second, that it protects the young plant. As to the first, not a single assignable reason can be given. No one can show how the presence of one seed is to have any influence upon the activity and vitality of the other. There are certain conditions essential to the germination of all seeds. Granting the seed has life, and is healthy, and uninjured, these conditions, and only these, are necessary, or exert any well-defined influence—that the seed have the proper amount of heat, moisture and air, and that no noxious substances injurious to vegetation be present. This is what is accomplished in the preceding method of sprouting seed. As to the next assumption, that the grain protects the young plant, let us inquire what makes the plants grow? They will grow when they have a soil sufficiently fertile, that contains sufficient plant food and moisture, and they must receive sunlight and air. Does the other crop furnish any of these conditions? It robs the soil of the food the young grass should receive, it robs the air in the same way, and shuts off the sunlight—the great source of power which enables all plants to grow. As no good reason leads us to sow our grass in this way, let us see what experience—that final teacher—tells us. When sown with another crop, the grass makes a small and spindling growth; the crop is removed in the summer after it has exhausted the soil of food and moisture, leaving the grass to dry up, and, unless the season is exceptional, to be stunted in its growth. When, on the other hand, the grass seed is sown alone on a well prepared soil, and highly covered with earth, a good crop of grass may always be cut that year, and often two cuttings can be made, or, if pasture is the object, it may be pastured considerably, leaving in each case strong, healthy plants to go over the winter for the next season, plants that will produce far greater yields than by the other system.

TILLAGE.—The ground should be thoroughly cultivated, and every weed

destroyed before sowing the seed. Although some trouble, it is the cheapest way in the end. When the ground has been put in a better condition than for grain crops, the seed may be sown. Any method will do that distributes the seed evenly over the surface. The amount to sow varies with the kind of seed, the percentage that germinates, and the condition of the soil. If for pasture, heavy stock should not be put on it much the first year, nor should any stock be on when the soil is wet. It is poor economy to allow it to be pastured close. If for meadow, it is not wise to cut it close.

FUNCTIONS OF ROOTS AND LEAVES.—The leaves are the great gatherers of food from the air; it is in them that this food is converted into fit material for the plant, and if these be removed, the plant is weakened. The roots, on the other hand, gather food from the soil, hence, not only does the poaching of stock injure the soil when wet, but also breaks the roots, and thus injures and often kills the plant.

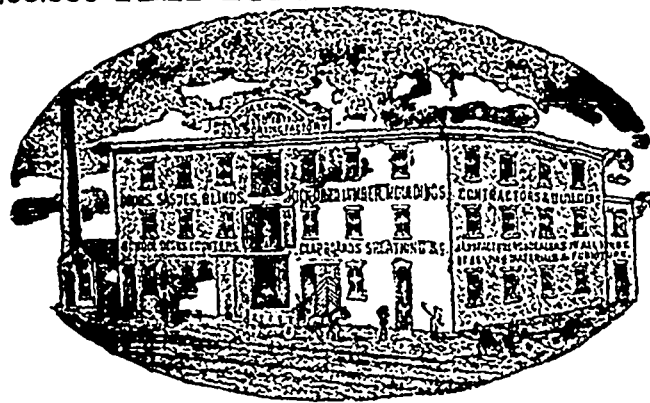
MANURING THE MEADOW.—In every case the plant needs food, whether designed for pasture or meadow. This should be given when or before the seeding is done, but it should also be furnished to the meadow regularly. When hay is removed from the field an amount of fertilizing material is removed, estimated from five to ten dollars per ton. This is an enormous drain on the soil; and if we expect our soils to bear up under it, and grow good crops, we must at least replace most of the material. These are some simple facts to bear in mind. The observing of them will increase the yield in many cases, and make this all-important crop still more profitable to our farmers.

"Then learn to toil and gaily sing
All flesh is grass and grass is king."

ADVICE TO MOTHERS.—Are you disturbed at night and broken of your rest by a sick child suffering and crying with pain of cutting teeth? If so, send at once and get a bottle of "Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup," for Children Teething. Its value is incalculable. It will relieve the poor little sufferer immediately. Depend upon it, mothers, there is no mistake about it. It cures Dysentery and Diarrhoea, regulates the Stomach and Bowels, cures Wind Colic, softens the Gums, reduces Inflammation, and gives tone and energy to the whole system. "Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup" for children teething is pleasant to the taste, and is the prescription of one of the oldest and best female physicians and nurses in the United States, and is for sale by all druggists throughout the world. Price, 25 cents a bottle.

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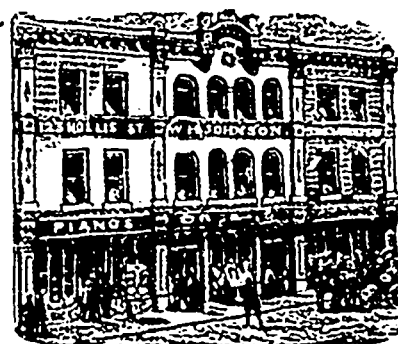
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